

FROM : Martic Township

FAX NO. : 717-284-4425

Mar. 26 2004 11:32AM P1

E1-752
ED*Supervisors:**James Hostetter, Sr.**Thomas (Ted) Irwin**Barbara Stokes**Frank Peiffer**Richard C. Drumm, Jr.**Chair**Vice - Chair**Treasurer**Roadmaster**Supervisor*

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FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO: Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Troy Brady

FAX #: 1-610-793-4396

FROM: Judy Ament
Martic Township Secretary

DATE: March 26, 2004

PAGES (Including Cover): 4

RE: Railroad newspaper articles

MEMO: Dear Mr. Brady,

As per Frank Peiffer's request, attached please find the Lancaster Newspapers article and cartoon concerning the railroad issue for your information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Frank Peiffer at the Township office Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Sincerely,



Judy M. Ament
Martic Township Secretary

FROM : Martie Township

FAX NO. : 717-284-4425

Mar. 26 2004 11:32AM P2

Railroad: Get county off rail line

*Firm plans to hand it
over to 7 municipalities*

BY CARRIE CALDWELL
Intelligencer Journal Staff

Norfolk Southern Railroad is asking a federal panel to ignore Lancaster County Commissioners' petition to delay the transfer of ownership of an abandoned rail line.

The railroad on Monday filed a letter with the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, arguing that the commissioners' petition has nothing to do with the "narrow scope" of the historical-significance study being conducted on the 23-mile Enola rail line.

By filing the petition, the county commissioners are trying to keep intact the 800-acre rail line. Under the terms of a 7-year-old agreement, the rail line, along with 52 bridges, would be handed over to seven municipalities in southern Lancaster County. The municipalities also would receive money to maintain the line and bridges.

Each municipality — Quarryville Borough and Bart, Conestoga, Eden, Martie, Providence and Sadsbury townships — would be given the portion of the rail line through which it passes, according to the agreement.

Delaying execution of the agreement could buy enough time for the county to find a public use for the rail line, which stretches from Shenks Ferry to near Parkesburg in Chester County. One of the options is to create a public trail, a proposal that has been debated for at least 15 years.

In addition to court battles and opposition to a rails-to-trail proposal, a court-mandated historical-significance study by the Surface Transportation Board further delayed the agreement's execution.

Results of the study is expected "any day now," Rudy Husband, spokesman for Norfolk Southern, said Tuesday.

The study, however, cannot prevent the railroad and the seven municipalities from finalizing their agreement, in spite of what the commissioners believe, Husband said.

"We're talking about two very different issues," Husband said. "Norfolk Southern's only object is to convey the property. The STB has nothing to do with that."

A4 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2004

Husband also said the county is using part of a statement Norfolk Southern made last year to justify its petition.

Norfolk Southern last year said it would be willing to discuss converting the rail line into a trail, but only under certain conditions, namely if all of the municipalities were supportive of the trail concept.

To date, the municipalities have yet to reach a consensus on how to use the land.

"(The commissioners) are using part of our statement to advance their own agenda," Husband said.

Please see RAILROAD, page A8

Railroad

Continued from A1

Commissioner Molly Henderson, the county's liaison for the rails-to-trails project, referred all technical questions to their solicitor.

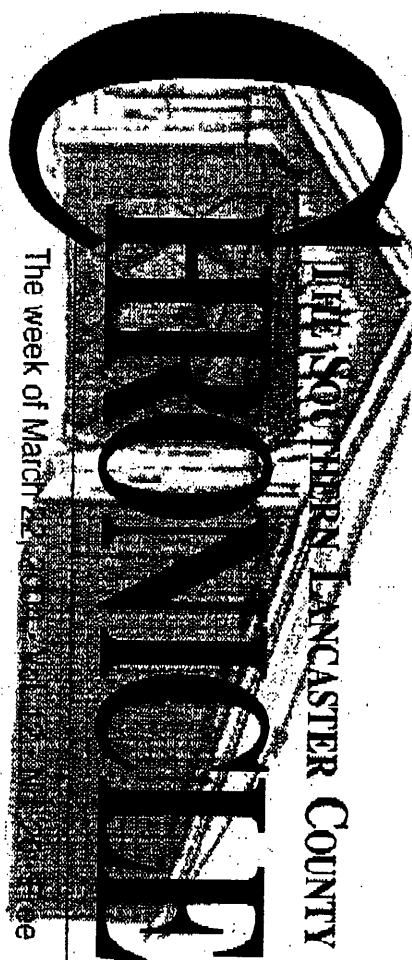
"We have our solicitor reviewing that," said Henderson, who was informed of the railroad's letter after she and the other commissioners returned from a convention in Harrisburg.

"The county is very interested in continuing to work with the (municipalities) to preserve this 23-mile corridor," she said. "We intend to see what the townships and the public have to say about it."

FROM : Martie Township

FAX NO. : 717-284-4425

Mar. 26 2004 11:33AM P3



In our opinion ...

A matter of trust

At least one Lancaster County Commissioner, Molly Henderson, has said publicly that she saw the March 10 meeting about the Enola low grade rail line as successful. We disagree.

It was a fiasco.

Asking local officials to attend the meeting to provide information and input and then announce a decision had already been made was an affront to the supervisors and council members who attended.

That would be bad enough, but it got worse. When former Providence Township supervisor Gerry Duvall told Shaub the townships had a signed agreement with the railroad, Shaub refuted his statement. He had, Shaub said, seen the agreement and it had never been signed.

Not that agreement, Duvall replied. The agreement he was talking about was with the railroad, not the county. That agreement, reached in 1996 and 1997, was well-publicized at the time.

Following the meeting, county officials sent a fax to the townships involved, telling them to supply a copy of that agreement. If the copy was not received promptly, the fax said, the county would assume it did not exist.

Fortunately for all involved, the Norfolk Southern, owner of the rail line, has a complete signed copy. While that may put the issue to rest, it speaks volumes for the county's research and preparation that they knew nothing about the agreement until the meeting.

That the meeting was held near the ninth anniversary of the purchase of the county's first, and so far only, park in the Southern End was probably coincidence. But the fact that nine years had passed since the park was purchased and none of the major improvements promised at the time have been completed does not improve the county's position.

To put it bluntly, Mr. Shaub and Ms. Henderson squandered the county's credibility and self-proclaimed impartiality at the March 11 meeting.

That trust cannot, will not, be regained simply by appearing at municipal meetings across the Southern End next month. We will need more than bland assurances from the county commissioners before we will again be willing to take their statements at face value. We've seen just how far county promises can be trusted when it comes to parks in the Southern End.

FROM :Martie Township

FAX NO. :717-284-4425

Mar. 26 2004 11:34AM P4

THE SOUTHERN LANCASTER COUNTY CHRONICLE

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